

his wife, Lynne, as we commemorated the—a day that really helped—or it did define our Nation, which is 9/11/2001. We also had a church service earlier, and I thank particularly the Speaker and the leader for being there as well.

Secondly, all of us around this table are saddened by the loss of Congressman Paul Gillmor. Congressman Blunt has just come from his memorial service. All of us offer our prayers to the Gillmor family during this difficult time.

And finally, I've asked the leadership to come and share their thoughts about Iraq. As I mentioned, we've had a series of hearings where our commander on the ground and Ambassador in Iraq have talked about a way forward. I think it's very important before I make up my mind that I consult with the leaders of the House and the Senate. I thank the Members for coming and giving me their honest appraisal of whether they think we can find common ground or not and how they think we ought to proceed.

So thank you for coming; appreciate you being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

Statement on the Death of Prime Minister John Compton of Saint Lucia

September 11, 2007

Laura and I offer our condolences to the people of Saint Lucia on the death of Prime Minister John Compton. The father of Saint Lucia's independence, Sir John was an elder statesman of the Caribbean. We will miss his vision and leadership, and we extend our deepest sympathies to his family.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan

September 7, 2007

I send greetings to Muslims observing Ramadan in America and around the world.

Ramadan, the holiest days of the Islamic faith, begins with the first light of dawn and commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to the prophet Muhammad. During the days of fasting, prayer, and worship, Muslims reflect and remember their dependence on God. Ramadan is also an occasion for Muslims to strengthen family and community ties and share God's gifts with those in need.

America is a land of many faiths, and our society is enriched by our Muslim citizens. May the holy days of Ramadan remind us all to seek a culture of compassion and serve others in charity.

Laura and I send our best wishes. Ramadan Mubarak.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 12. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Proclamation 8175—National Hispanic Heritage Month, 2007

September 12, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Hispanic Americans have strengthened our country and contributed to the spirit of America. National Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity to honor these contributions and celebrate the rich cultural traditions of our Hispanic-American community.

Hispanic Americans have helped establish America as a place of freedom and opportunity, and their contributions have illustrated what is best about our great Nation. Their hard work, love of country, and deep commitment to faith and family have shaped the character of our country and helped preserve the values we all cherish. By sharing their vibrant culture and heritage, Hispanic Americans have also enriched the American experience and helped define the unique fabric of our Nation.

Americans of Hispanic heritage have carried on a proud tradition of service to our Nation. In times of great consequence, they have answered the call to defend America

as members of our Armed Forces. These brave men and women bring honor to America, and we are grateful for their service and sacrifice. In our towns and communities, Hispanic Americans have also shown the good heart of our Nation by volunteering to help their fellow Americans. Their kindness and compassion have made a difference in the lives of others and have made our country a more hopeful place for all.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the diversity that makes America stronger, and we recognize the many ways Hispanic Americans have enriched our Nation. To honor the achievements of Hispanic Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 100-402, as amended, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 15 through October 15, 2007, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:37 a.m., September 14, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 17. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Proclamation 8176—National Farm Safety and Health Week, 2007

September 12, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's farmers and ranchers are good stewards of our land, providing a healthy, safe, and abundant food supply for our country and for people around the world. During National Farm Safety and Health Week, we pay tribute to our farmers and ranchers and their families for their contributions to our Nation, and we raise awareness of the importance of practicing and promoting safe work habits and conditions on farms and ranches.

Making a living off the land exposes agricultural workers to many potential dangers, such as extreme weather conditions, fertilizers and chemicals, and heavy machinery. Taking steps to identify these hazards and instructing family members in safe practices will help save lives and prevent injuries. Farmers and ranchers can help avoid accidents and protect lives by staying informed, being proactive, and remaining vigilant.

Across the United States, farm and ranch communities embody the values of hard work, faith, and love of family. This week and throughout the year, we encourage farmers and ranchers to practice responsible work habits as they continue to help America remain strong and prosperous.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 16 through September 22, 2007, as National Farm Safety and Health Week. I call upon the agencies, organizations, and businesses that serve America's agricultural workers to continue to strengthen their commitment to promoting farm safety and health programs. I also urge all Americans to honor our agricultural heritage and to recognize our farmers and ranchers for their remarkable contributions to our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven,